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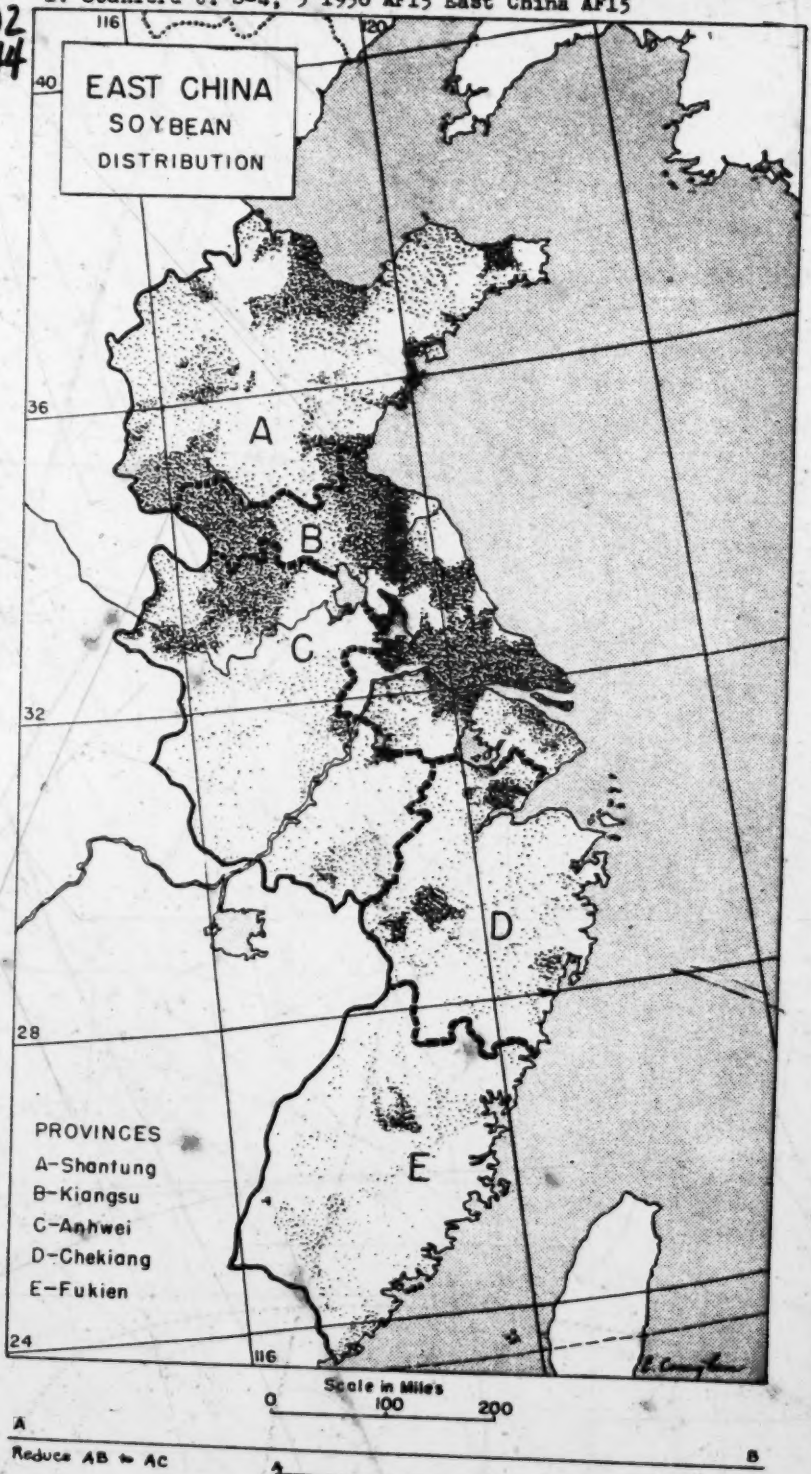

[Face p. 738 (c)]

311 The extensive system of lakes articulated with Tai Lake is by no means 226 lost to agriculture, since most of these bodies of water are shallow 244 enough to permit widespread aquiculture of water chestnuts and lotus (whose roots form an important part of the local diet), as well as supporting a considerable fishing industry on both an exploitative and a farming basis.[2]

311 Cultivation within the triangle is at least as intensive as in any 241 other part of the world. The growing season allows only one crop of rice, but winter crops of wheat and rape seed harvested in May occupy the rice fields after they are drained following the rice harvest in September-October. Cotton is planted in dry fields at the same time as rice in early May. Broad beans are usually intercultivated with the cotton. West and northwest from Soochow as far as the northern tip of Tai Lake as much as 20 per cent of the cultivated area is devoted to mulberry, but even here rice is dominant, and over the triangle as a whole occupies about 75 per cent of the total crop acreage. Vegetables are grown in small plots by nearly every farmer, and within a day's boat travel of Shanghai (approximately 30 miles) they rank third (after rice and cotton) in total acreage.[3]

241 Intensive cultivation is decreed by the dense population characteristically associated with deltas in east Asia (the fertile triangle is one of the primary density areas of China), and made possible by the natural fertility of the soil and the ready availability of water. Common usage in the area of the triangle calls for the bodily exchange of soil once in every three years between rice paddies and

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to depending on them at the specific points for which they are cited below. They would include C. C. Chang, Agricultural Statistics (1930), and *China's Food Problem* (1931), Chiang I-shih, Production of Various Cereals (1947), Chao Lien-fang, The Problem of Rice Production (1947) — including estimates from the early 1930's of the amount of cultivated land in rice, by provinces — Chiang Hsüeh-chai, A New Estimate of the Supply and Demand (1936), Feng Hu-fa, Source Materials (1935), Kuo Ming-hsüeh, Chinese Agricultural Resources (1948), Shen Tsung-han, Chinese Food Problems (1947), and *The Agricultural Resources of China* (1951), and T'ang Chi-yu, *An Economic Study of Chinese Agriculture* (1924) — including figures as of 1920 for rice production and cultivated land in the seven leading rice provinces. Wang P'ei-hsün, The Volume of China's Food Imports and Exports (1947), is a brief general discussion of China's foreign trade in food commodities as an introduction to selected statistics from individual ports.

2: Murphy G-4 (no date) 1953 AF15 East China AF15

consumption in the city. As in the case of Shanghai, Canton may act as an entrepôt for rice imports to other cities.

This may suggest that China as a whole produces enough to feed itself, even by traditional farming methods, if only the food could be transported cheaply enough. As it is, foreign rice moves only to the large coastal cities, because transport costs once it leaves the sea prevent further penetration. The rice comes in because at certain periods it is cheap, and it is cheap relative to Chinese rice primarily because of the difference in transport costs between sea and land. It may be found when full facts are available that the flow of rice to large Chinese cities, which depends on price, is governed predominantly by transport costs, as it is in the case of Shanghai, and that where cheap transport is possible, local sources form the major part of the supply.

Other Food Commodities

The Yangtze delta, and more especially the fertile triangle, is a specialized agricultural area, more so than most agricultural regions of China because of its greater degree of commercialization. Its special crop is rice, with cotton, mulberry, and vegetables the only other significant items. Some wheat is grown, but it is of relatively minor importance in the fertile triangle and is raised mainly as a dry-field winter crop between rice plantings. Shanghai's dependence on local sources for rice is thus not matched by the rest of its food supply. The significance of the city's water connections with other agricultural regions is apparent in the fact that in a largely pre-railroad and pre-commercial economy, Shanghai is able to depend on distant sources for many food items in a way, if not to a degree, which is in certain respects comparable to the food supply pattern developed for large cities in the United States and Western Europe.

Shanghai has its own truck- and market-garden area, much as large Western cities have, with the difference that vegetables in particular have always been grown there and that environmental conditions in the fertile triangle are virtually ideal for market-garden-type production. Near most Western cities, soil, climate, and relief must often be fitted with difficulty into the needs of the city for fresh local food. Vegetable production in the fertile triangle

2: Murphy G-4 (no date) 1953 AF15 East China AF15

for sale in Shanghai is not only convenient but environmentally advantageous.

How much of the city's supply of vegetables comes from its market-garden area (a day's water travel, or about a 30-mile radius from the city, an area where vegetables rival rice as the leading crop), and how much from greater distances is difficult to determine with any accuracy in the absence of published records. The principal vegetable market in Shanghai is along both banks of Soochow Creek near its mouth, which suggests that vegetables come into the city by water from its immediate environs. Merchants and vendors there, including many farmers who bring their vegetables into the city by sampan for daily or twice weekly markets, speak only of the near neighborhood of the city as the source of their wares. About 15 square miles within the Municipality of Greater Shanghai itself are occupied by vegetable crops,[31] which can take the fullest advantage both of convenience to the market and of favorable environment in this fertile flat delta land. Vegetables undoubtedly come into the city in large amounts from greater distances, although it is unlikely that bulk shipments of such perishable commodities would move beyond the delta. The railways do not carry them in any significant quantities.[32]

Although its place in the Shanghai diet is relatively minor (see above p. 139), wheat is a major food commodity for the city because of the prominent place of the flour milling industry there. While over two-thirds of the flour milled is exported, principally to north China ports, the wheat must first be brought to the city even though most of it is not eventually consumed there.

Shanghai drew its domestic wheat largely from Kiangsu. Only a minor crop within the fertile triangle, wheat is of much greater importance in the drier and colder areas of Kiangsu north of the Yangtze, and in the western parts of the delta. This production, plus the wheat raised almost entirely for sale as a dry-field winter crop within the fertile triangle, can be carried to Shanghai from nearly every producing area via the water network of the delta, including the Yangtze itself. While the delta area is by no means a leading wheat producer, it is wholly unique among wheat areas in China in its cheap and easy transport connections with a large urban